

The Wisdom of Abu Haneefah



Maulana Ahmad Ali

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" IN JURISPRUDENCE ALL SCHOLARS ARE CHILDREN OF ABU HANIFA"
(IMAM SHAFI'E)

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40 Greaves Street
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BD5 7PE

Telephone – 01274 575600

By Maulana Ahmad Ali

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This work
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Allah and this or any other
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I would like to thank all those who helped
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And Dua's.

Ahmad Ali



In Jurisprudence All Scholars Are Children Of Abu Hanifa

(Imam Shafi'a)

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Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, The Most Beneficent and The Most Merciful.

We praise Him, and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of ourselves and the mischief of our deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides cannot be misguided and whomsoever Allah misguides cannot be guided.
Peace and blessings be upon the final messenger, Muhammad (SAW), upon his family and his noble companions. Ameen.

Abu Hanifa Nu'man bin Thabit, otherwise known as Imam Azam (the greatest Imam) was born in Kufa in 80 A.H. He had the good fortune of meeting one of the companions which conferred upon him the rank of Ta'biee, an honour not bestowed upon anyone of the other three famous Imams. Abu Hanifa's inventiveness, soundness, and originality are incomparable which is clearly evident in his writings. His intelligence, intellectual reaches and breadth of learning was unique. It had always been my desire to demonstrate this and I believe through this booklet, Allah has given me the ability to do so. In it I have translated stories attributed to him, which clearly demonstrate he was a genius and because the books used were limited the reference to them is given here and not in the stories.

The Books were:
Al-Khairatul-Hisan of Ibn Hajjr Al Makki
Uqudul Jumman-Muhammad Bin Yusuf
Tabyeedus-Sahifa of Suyuti
Al-Manaqib of Al Khurduree

For those that know little of him I conclude the introduction with a very brief sketch of his life

His Characteristics

He was a scholar of Iraq and the foremost representative and exemplar of the school of juridical opinion (ra'y). Coupled with his legal brilliance was his well known piety and asceticism, and though he had wealth from a number of shops selling cloth, he devoted his fortune to helping students and researchers in fiqh.

He shunned sleep at night and some called him the peg because of his perpetual standing for prayer, often reciting the entire Quran in his rak'ats. He performed the Fajr salaah for forty years with the wudhu (ablution) made for 'Isha salaah and would only sleep for a short while between Dhohar and 'Asr prayers. By the end of his life he had recited the Qur'an seven thousand times in the place where he died. He would never sit in the shade of a wall belonging to someone who owed him money, saying, "Every loan that brings benefit is usury". Qadhi Abu Yusuf said "Abu Hanifah was extremely pious, avoided forbidden things and answered questions only

when he knew the answer. He was generous and never asked a favour of anybody."

His Works

There are three books attributed to the Imam, the first of these books being Fiqhul Akbar is a brief treatise on dogmatic, dealing with the same questions and approximately in the same order as the 'Aqa'id of Nasafi and other writings on Aqeeda. Al-'Alim wal-muta'allim is a small treatise in the form of questions and answers.

Of the Musnad there were several versions that were collected in a single volume by Abul-Mu'yid Muhammad B. Muhammad al-khwarazmi (d. 665 AH). The work was a compilation of the Musnads, which had been composed by different scholars on the basis of Hadiths narrated by Abu Hanifa. It included: The Musnad of 'Abd-allah al ustad; the Musnad of Imam Abul-Qasim Talha b. Muhammad; the Musnad of Hafiz Abul-Hasan. Muhammad b. al-Muzaffar; the Musnad of Hafiz Abu Nu'aim al-Isbahani; the Musnad of Imam Abu Ahmad 'Abd-Allah b. 'Adi al jurjani: the Musnad of Imam Abu Yusuf Qadhi; the Musnad of Imam Muhammad; the Musnad of Hammad b. Imam Abu Hanifah; the Athar of Imam Muhammad; the Musnad of Imam Abul Qasim 'Abd-Allah b. Abial-Awwam al-'Adi and many others.

The Imam and his school have been misunderstood by some who have believed that the Imam's knowledge of Hadith was largely limited to what was transmitted by the narrators in Kufa, especially through the companion Ibn Mas'ud (RA) In fact, the Imam was a Hadith expert who had all the Hadiths of the companions of Makkah and Madina in addition to those of Kufa. When one reads Muwatta' al Imam Muhammad one who gains complete conviction from Muhammad's notes that virtually every Hadith therein was familiar to Abu Hanifah before he arrived at the positions of his school, all of which is a persuasive case against the suggestions of the unlearned that Abu Hanifah did not know Hadith.

His Fiqh

The Hanafi school, which he founded, has decided court cases in the majority of the Muslim world for the greater part of Islam's history. Abu Hanifah was the first to analyse Islamic jurisprudence, divide it into subjects, distinguish its issues and determine the range and criteria for analogical reasoning (Qiyas) therein. Imam Shafi'i used to say to him, "In jurisprudence (Fiqh), all scholars are the children of Abu Hanifa". The Imam travelled to Makkah, Madina, Basra to learn fiqh and Hadith as well as from the learned jurists of Kufah.

The Hanafi system of fiqh is unique compared to the systems of the other schools. The source of the Hanafi fiqh is not just Imam Abu Hanifah alone. The Imam and over forty of his

most dedicated students who themselves were masters in branches of Islamic sciences such as Tafseer, Nasikh-Mansukh, Asbaabun Nuzool, 'Usool ul Hadith, 'Ilm ul Kalaam, etc. and were from all over the Muslim world and comprised the body that laid the foundational principles of the school.

In the light of these sound and firm 'Usool (principles), Furoo' (branches) masaa'il were derived. This entire panel of highly qualified jurists, who were embodiments of unrivalled piety and knowledge, would congregate daily under their greater scholar, Imam Abu Hanifa and would deliberate on the masaa'il (issues) that were to be clarified. A detailed discussion would follow, where everyone had the full authority to express his opinion freely. All the arguments would be noted and examined and after every probable angle was probed, a unanimous view would be formulated that would eventually be recorded in the registers of the Hanafi school.

At times these discussions would proceed over many months before a final decision could be reached. In other words, every mas'la would be endorsed by so many qualified experts of fiqh before it would be released to the public.

The Christian and the Questions

It is related that a Christian king sent a trustworthy person to Baghdad with a large amount of money. The king set him a task to ask the Muslims three questions and if they are able to answer them correctly then he could leave the money with them.

He arrived in Baghdad and informed the Khaliph (the Muslim ruler in charge) of his quest. The Khaliph responded to the challenge by gathering the best Ulama (learned religious people). The Christian climbed the pulpit and addressed them, "If you are able to answer my questions then the money is yours, if not I will return as I came." He then proceeded to ask the questions.

The Christian: "What came before Allah?"

"Which direction is Allah's face."

"What does He (Allah) do?"

The Ulama were dumbstruck. They had no idea on how to begin answering these questions because no one had ever asked them these types of questions. Imam Abu Hanifa, who at the time was only a child was also at the gathering accompanied by his father. He asked his father's permission to speak but was told to remain quiet. In his eagerness to defend Islam he stood up and

asked the permission of the Khaliph to answer the questions. Abu Hanifa was duly given permission and asked the Christian, "Are you the questioner or the one questioned?"
The Christian replied, "The questioner."
"Then you should be standing in my place and I sitting in yours." replied Abu Hanifa.
Thus the Christian descended and Abu Hanifa climbed the pulpit and said "Now question".
The Christian: "What came before Allah?"
Abu Hanifa: "Do you know how to count?"
The Christian: "Yes"
Abu Hanifa: "Count"
The Christian then began to count 1,2, 3......

It was at this point that Abu Hanifa interrupted the Christian
Abu Hanifa: "What comes before 1?"
The Christian: "The numbers begin with 1, there is nothing before 1"
Abu Hanifa: "If there is nothing before this metaphorical 1 then how can there be anything before The Real 1. As for your second question, "In which direction is Allah's face?" When you light a candle in front of you, which direction is its face?"
The Christian: "That is light equal in all four directions"

Abu Hanifa: "So if metaphoric light is in all four directions, then the light of the heavens and earth is more worthy (meaning if somebody as clever as you cannot work out the direction of the face of the candle, which is a creation, then how can we work out the direction of The Face of The Creator, as He is limitless)

Imam Abu Hanifa moved onto answer the third and final question.

Abu Hanifa: "As for your third question, what is Allah doing?"

When He found an assimilator like yourself on the pulpit He made him descend and when he found a monotheist like myself standing on the ground, He made him sit on the pulpit."

It was at this point that the humiliated Christian made a quick exit leaving the money behind.

Qiyaas

Abdullah bin al Mubarak relates that when Imam Abu Hanifa went for Hajj he met Mohammed bin Ali in Medinah. Mohammed bin Ali said to him, "Are you the one who gives preference to Qiyaas over the hadith of

my grandfather." The Imam replied, "I seek Allah`s protection from this, sit down." He sat down and the Imam sat infront of him with respect and said, "I would like to ask you three questions. Who is the weaker, man or woman?" "Woman" He replied. "How much does a man inherit and how much does a woman." "The woman's share is half that of a man," he replied. The Imam said, "If I gave preference to qiyas then I would have said the opposite (i.e. the woman should inherit more.) The second question "Is salat more superior or fasting." He replied, "to observe salat." Imam Abu Hanifa said, "If I gave preference to qiyaas over hadith then I would say haiza (woman in menstruation) should make qadha of her salaat (read the prayers she missed during her period) and not her fasts." The third question "Is urine more impure or semen." He replied, "Urine." Imam Abu Hanifa said, "If I gave qiyaas preference then I would have said it is not incumbent to have a bath after the discharge of semen and it is incumbent to have a bath after the discharge of urine. I seek Allah's protection from going against the hadith. All I do is loiter about. Muhammad bin Ali was so impressed by the Imam's love for the Sunnah that he stood up and kissed the Imam's forehead.

Buried Treasure

Hasan bin Ziyaad relates that a man once buried his treasure and then forgot where he had buried it. He searched everywhere but could not find it. He decided to go and see Imam Abu Hanifa and related his problem. Imam Abu Hanifa advised him "This is not a problem of fiqh that I can solve. Go home and offer salat all night until you remember where you have buried it." Acting upon the Imam`s advice he stood in prayer and less than a quarter of the night passed and he remembered where he had buried the treasure. The man then went and retrieved the treasure. The man then related the events to Imam Abu Hanifa who in turn said to the man, "I knew the devil would not let you pray all night until he himself would remind you. Only if you had prayed all night thanking Allah (swt)."

Is this person a Kaafir or not?

Muhammad bin Mukatil relates that a man approached Imam Abu Hanifa and asked him, "What is your opinion regarding a person who does not hope for Jannat, who doesn't fear Allah (swt) and is not afraid of

the fire of Hell. He eats meat of animals not slaughtered according to religious requirements and observes prayers without Ruku (bowing) and Sujud (prostration), and testifies to what he has not seen (witnessed). He dislikes Haq (which is right and certain) and loves Fitna (trials and tribulations)?".

The students of Imaam Abu Hanifa replied "This persons situation is difficult, problematic and hard to solve." In another version it is narrated that they replied, "This person is very bad and these characteristics are of a Kafir".

Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "This persons situation is not difficult and these are not properties of a Kafir, as this is a person who doesn't wish or hope for jannat but wishes and looks forward to meeting Allah (swt). He fears Allah (swt) and not the Fire of Hell (obviously he who fears Allah (swt) will refrain from all that is prohibited and do what is asked of him and thus will not need to fear Hell as he will be going into Jannah - Inshallah). He doesn't fear injustice and unfairness from Allah (swt) in His rule. He eats Fish and Crust (remember these do not have to be slaughtered). He reads salatul jannaza in which there is no ruku or sujud. He testifies that there is only One Allah (swt) (though he has not seen him) and Muhammad (saw) is His

essenger. He dislikes haq (what is right) which is ath, as it is certain. He loves his children, money, ealth and possessions as they are fitna. After hearing is remarkable answer, the questioner stood up and ssed Imam Abu Hanifa's head and said, " I bear tness that you are a receptacle for knowledge."

The Kharijites

Hamaad relates that when the Kharijites were formed that Imam Abu Hanifa doesn't call anyone a afir for committing sin, they sent a group of 70 to eet with him. (Note the Kharijites believe that ybody who committed a major sin no longer remained the fold of Islam).

They approached the Imaam and said, "Our oblem (question) is the same." There were people tting in front of Imam Abu Hanifa, he told them to ake way for them. They made their way directly in ont of the Imam, unsheathed their swords and said, Oh enemy of the Ummah, we are going to kill you in iblic, as killing you is better and rewarding than aking jihad with our enemies for 70 years." He asked em, "Will you not debate the issue with me?" They

agreed. The Imam asked them to put their swords in their sheathes. They replied, "How shall we put them in as we want to colour them in your blood?"

Imam Abu Hanifa asked, "Anyway what is your problem, what is your question?" They replied, "What is your opinion regarding two funerals. A funeral of a man who drank wine until he died from it, and the second, a funeral of a woman who committed adultery and thus became pregnant and then killed herself?"

"Which faith are they from, are they Jews, Christians or Magians?" the Imam asked. "Neither" they replied. Imam asked once again, "Which sect are they from?" They answered, "They are from that sect which bears witness that 'there is no God but Allah (swt) and Muhammad (saw) is His Messenger'." Imam Abu Hanifa then asked, "Tell me about this shahada (testimony), what part of Iman is it? Is it a third of Iman or a quarter." They replied, "Iman doesn't have any parts, it doesn't have thirds or quarters." Imam Abu Hanifa asked the same question again, they replied, "It is all of Iman." Imam Abu Hanifa then said, "When Iman doesn't have parts and these two believe and testify to the one Allah (swt) and that Muhammad (saw) is His Messenger, then tell me are they the funerals of Muslims or Kafirs?" They became embarrassed and

distressed as they had been cornered and were unable to answer and thus said, "Forget this question there is another question, tell us are these two from the people of Jannah or from the people of Hell?" Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "Regarding them I will say what Prophet Ibrahim (as) said regarding those who were more sinful and committed more crimes than these two. The Qur'an relates what he said, 'Whoso follows me, he verily is of me and whoso disobeys me, still You are indeed Forgiving, Most Merciful (surah Ibraheem). Like Iesa(as) said regarding those who more sinful. The Qur'an relates that he said, 'If you punish them, they are your slaves and if you forgive them, verily You, only You are the All-mighty, the All-wise .(surah al-maidah).

I will not answer you

Ali bin Umar al Alwi relates that Qatada (a famous scholar) visited Kufa. On hearing of his arrival people came and gathered around him. He challenged, "Ask me any question regarding Fiqh. Imam Abu Hanifa, who was also present asked, "What is your opinion regarding a woman who's husband is missing?." (He is lost/absent and she doesn't know of his where about, whether he is alive or dead). He held the same

view as Umar (ra) held, that she wait (for him) for 4 years, and if he is still missing after that and she hasn't received any information regarding him then she should sit in Iddat (a waiting period during which a widow or divorcee cannot marry) for 4 months and after iddat she can get married to whom she pleases. He further asked, " What if her first husband returns, after she married some one else and says to her, "You remarried whilst I was still alive", and the second husband says, "You married me though you were already had a husband." Who's wife is she? And who out of the two will make Liaan (oath of condemnation, sworn allegation of adultery committed by one's spouse)." Qatada became angry and said, "I will not answer you regarding anything."

I hope I'm a believer

Ubaidullah ar-Rasafi relates that we were with Atah bin Abi Rabah when Imam Abu Hanifa imposed a question on some man. He asked him, "Are you a Mu'min (believer)?" He replied, "I hope I'm a believer." Imam Abu Hanifa said, "Is this what you will say when

Munkar and Nakir question you in the grave? That I hope I am a believer." The man understood and thus repented.

To Tell or Not To Tell

Bishr bin Waleed relates that Qais bin Rabi`h said I was with Imam Abu Hanifa when a man who was very depressed and downcast came to him. He sat down and said, "Oh Imam, thieves broke into my house last night. They took what they were able to carry but I managed to recognise one of them as he was from my locality and offers his prayers in my mosque. When this burglar realised that I had recognised him, he grabbed hold of me and tied me up. He then forced me to say under oath, 'my wife is divorced, my slaves are free, and I will give everything I possess as ṣadqa (charity) to the poor if I mention his name or inform anyone regarding him or point him out to anyone with my hands or my head'. I fear I will break and violate my oath if I do any one of these things." Imam Abu Hanifa told him to go and send somebody he trusts. The man left and sent his brother to the imam.

Imam Abu Hanifa said to him, "Go to the Khalif (ruler) and relate your brothers story to him, and ask

him to send one of his assistants. When the Khalif's assistant comes tell him to gather everyone who offers their prayers in your brothers mosque and not to leave anybody out. Then tell the assistant to ask everyone to leave the mosque after the prayers one by one, and tell him to ask your brother every time one of them comes out of the mosque, "Is this the thief?". At the same time tell your brother to say, "This is not him", if he is not the thief. When the thief comes out and the assistant asks your brother regarding him, tell him to remain quiet at that moment, not to talk or point with his fingers or motion with his head in his direction. That way the assistant will be able to catch him and take him to the Sultan".

His brother went to the Sultan and did exactly what the Imam had told him to do. Thus the assistant was successful in catching the thief. He took him to the Sultan and the thief in turn informed the Sultan of the rest. The stolen goods were taken from them and returned to the owner and all the thieves were imprisoned and punished.

Halal or Haraam?

Saeed bin Uthman relates that he heard Uthman bin Zaidah say that, "I was with Imam Abu Hanifa when a man asked him, 'What is your view regarding drinking in a glass of which a small portion is plated with silver?', he replied, 'It is acceptable, there is no objection to it.'" Thereafter the questioner went away. Uthman had not understood the answer he asked the Imam, "Give us an example which would clarify and serve as an evidence to the answer he had just given us.". He agreed and said, 'What is your opinion regarding a man who happened to pass by a river and was very thirsty. He didn't have any container to take the water out from the river. Instead he used his hands to scoop the water and then drink from them, whilst leaving a ring on his finger. So he drank from them, whilst having a silver ring on one of his fingers 'Is there any objection or harm in this?' he asked. I replied it's alright, there is nothing wrong or objectionable in it." Imam Abu Hanifa then said, 'It's mouth (meaning the part of the cup which was of silver) and this persons hands which he used as a cup were also part silver as he

was wearing a silver ring,'" Uthman realised and said, "I have never seen anyone that was better or swifter in replying than Imam Abu Hanifa."

Chief Justice

Kharija bin Musab relates that the Khalif, Abu Ja`far invited Imam Abu Hanifa to make him the Chief Justice (Qadi) but he refused and thus was imprisoned for a few of days. The Khalif called him once again, and questioned him "Oh Abu Hanifa, why is it that you do not accept our work, dislike it and turn away from it, though those who were better than you have done the same type of work (become Qadi)?. Imam Abu Hanifa replied "I am not fit to be the Chief Justice." "You are a liar," he replied. Imam Abu Hanifa then said, "Allahu-Akbar the commander of the faithful has just decided that I am not suitable and fit to be Chief Justice." The Ameer asked, "How?" Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "Because if I am a liar, then a liar is not fit to be the Chief Justice, and if I'm honest and right (like I said I am really not fit to be the Chief Justice) then the excuse

is evident."

A'mash and his wife

Saeed bin Yahya relates from his father that he said, "There was once an argument between A'mash and his wife, his wife became angry and said on oath that she would not talk to him. Now A'mash used to talk to her but she wouldn't reply, he became irritated and angry and said, 'If you do not talk to me by tonight then you are divorced.' When he cooled down and came to his senses, he was sorry and regretted what he had said, but he couldn't find a way out of this problem. He became very upset and thus went to Imam Abu Hanifa that night. The Imam welcomed him and was very hospitable to him. A'mash began to apologise (as at the beginning A'mash didn't used to associate with or show respect for the Imam). Imam Abu Hanifa said, 'Stop apologising and tell me the purpose of your visit.' When A'mash explained his situation, Imam Abu Hanifa replied, 'Don't worry you will be relieved of your problem very soon, if Allah (swa) makes it easy.'

He callèd the Muazzin and told him that when A'mash reached his house to give the Azaan for the morning prayer before dawn breaks (that is before its time). It was the practice in Kufa not to give the Azaan for any Salaat before its time, as Azaan is a means of informing the beginning of that Salaat, and to give Azaan for a Salaat before its time has began is not permissible (against shariah). So when this Muazzin gave Azaan for the Fajr prayer, before the night had ended, she assumed that, since she hadn't spoken to him all night and the night had come to an end as the muezzin had called the Azaan for the next day, she would be divorced and freed from this man and thus said to him, 'All Praise to Allah, Who has relieved me from you, oh you ill tempered.' A'mash replied, 'The night has not ended as it is not morning yet, it was a ploy, which came to affect and what a ploy it was, Allah have mercy on Abu Hanifa who told me about it.'"

The Problematic Oath

Imam Abu Yusuf relates that a man told Imam Abu Hanifa that he had said to his wife on oath that he would not talk to her until she talks to him, angered by

this she replied in return on oath that she would not talk to him until he talks to her, and if she does talk to him first then she will give all she possesses as sadqa (charity). Imam Abu Hanifa asked him whether he had shared this problem with anybody else. He replied, "Yes, with Sufyan Sawree. He ruled that the only option open was to make atonement for my oath." Imam Abu Hanifa said to him, "Talk to her as much as you please. There is no question of atonement." The man then went to Sufyan (as he was a cousin of his) and informed him of what the Imam had said. The narrator says Sufyan angrily went to Imam Abu Hanifa and reproached him for misleading people. Imam Abu Hanifa asked him to explain. Sufyan told his cousin to reiterate his story. He reiterated his story and Imam Abu Hanifa gave the same answer. "How did you reach your conclusion?" Sufyan asked. Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "When the woman repeated her husbands words, she took the initiative in speaking to him. So the husbands condition was fulfilled." Sufyan, amazed, gasped, "You unveil and bring into view knowledge regarding something from which all of us are inattentive and unmindful of."

Freed by Abu Hanifa

Imam Abu Hanifa narrates that "a man came to me and told me that his sister had just died, who was pregnant but the child was still moving inside her. I said to him, 'Go and cut her stomach, and take the child out.' He went, and acted upon what I had said to him. He came to me once again after 7 years with a child and asked whether I recognised him. I replied 'No.' He said, 'This is he, whom regarding you told me to cut his mother's stomach and take him out. I took him and named him Mowla Abu Hanifa (one who is freed by Abu Hanifa).

The killer snake

Yahya al-Marwazi relates that I heard Al Fadl Al Sijsy say, that "Abu Hanifa, Shareek, Sufyan and Ibn abi Layla happen to meet in some gathering. Somebody posed a question. 'What would you say regarding a group of people who were sitting together when a snake appeared and started to crawl up the body of one of them. He hurriedly shook it off and it landed on another

man. The second man shook it off his body onto a third man. This went on until the last man on whom the snake landed was bitten by it and thus died. Now, which of these men is liable to pay diyat (mulet) for the man's death ?' All the men plunged in to tackle this complex problem of fiqh. Some said, 'diyat was payable by all,' others disagreed and said, 'diyat was payable by the first man only.' There was a lot of discussion between them and they could not reach an agreement. Abu Hanifa sat silent through all this and smiled. They became unsettled and agitated. They turned to Abu Hanifa and asked him to express his opinion. The following is the ruling the Imam gave: 'When the first man threw the snake onto the second man and the latter escaped being bitten, the former was absolved from responsibility. The same was true of all the succeeding men, except the last one who shook off the snake. Now, as regards to this last man there are two possible positions: If the snake bit the next man as soon as it landed on him, then the last man to throw the snake was liable to pay diyat; if, on the other hand, there was an interval between the two events, then the man bitten was guilty of contributory negligence in not throwing off the snake promptly enough to save himself.'

The view was accepted by all present, complimenting the Imam's on his ingenuity.

Centre of the world

Abu Abdullah relates that one of Abu Jafar's very special servants was jealous of Imam Abu Hanifa. He would speak ill of him and associate with him cruel remarks. Abu Jafar used to tell him off and forbid him from making these remarks but he wouldn't refrain. One day this servant said, "Let me ask him three questions and if he answers these then I will stop." Abu Jafar told him, "If he knows the answers then I will have you beaten." He agreed. Abu Jafar invited Imam Abu Hanifa and the servant asked, "Where is the centre of the World?"; "Exactly where you are sitting now," replied Imam Abu Hanifa. Obviously a daft question deserved a similar answer so he remained quiet, as the only way to prove the Imam wrong would have been to measure the distance either side, which was impossible. He then asked, "Out of God's creation is the creation with heads more or the creation with feet more?" Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "The creation with heads are more." The servant then asked, "Out of God's creation are there

more males or females?" Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "There are plenty of males and plenty of females. Tell me from which are you?" (Since he himself was a eunuch (a castrated man)). He was startled, stunned and became speechless. Abu Jafar had him beaten.

Marriage

It has been reported that a man approached Imam Abu Hanifa and said, "I have a grown up son who is slightly demented. If I do not marry him off, I am scared he may commit adultery. He then started to explain how he got him married with some woman but after a while he divorced her and thus made a loss (because of the dowry he had given her on his behalf). He bought him a slave girl but he set her free and thus made another loss. "What shall I do?" he cried. Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "Go and buy a slave girl for your self. Then get her married with your son, if he divorces her you will lose nothing and if he sets her free, she will not be free (as she is not his property.)"

Divorce

Abul Mahaasin relates that it has been reported a man came to Imam Abu Hanifa and said, "I am impure, as ghusl is farz upon me, but I have said on oath that, 'If I take ghusl from this impurity then my wife is divorced with three Talaq.'" Imam Abu Hanifa took him by his hand kept talking to him until they reached a bridge on top of a river. Whilst they were crossing Imam Abu Hanifa pushed him into the water and when he had totally immersed in it Imam Abu Hanifa said, "You can come out now and return to your wife, as you are now pure and at the same time have not taken a bath"

It is reported that Imam Abu Hanifa was asked about a man whose wife was climbing a ladder to get to the roof, he saw her and didn't like what she was doing, and thus said, "If you climb any further you are divorced with three talaq and if you descend you are divorced with three talaq."

"What is the solution to this problem?" He replied, "She should remain exactly on the step she is on, not climbing a step nor descending a step, and a group of people should carry the ladder with the woman on it and then put the ladder down on the ground. This way she will not be divorced as she didn't climb nor descend." It is reported that he was asked, "Is there any other solution besides this." He replied, "Yes, if a group of women carry her off the ladder by force without her will, then she still will not be divorced."

It is reported that Imam Abu Hanifa was asked regarding a man who said on oath that, "If he eats an egg then his wife is divorced with three talaq, then his wife comes with an egg concealed in her hand. The husband without knowing she had an egg in her hand says, "If I do not eat what is in your hand you are divorced." "What is the solution?" He replied, "Put this egg under a chicken and once it is hatched roast it and eat it."

Twins

It is reported that a woman gave birth to a set of twins whose backs were joined. One of them died shortly after birth. The 'ulama of Kufa held the opinion that the one who was alive should also be buried along with the one who has died as it is impossible to separate them, but Imam Abu Hanifa suggested, "the dead one should be buried in some hole not far from here, covered with earth upto where they are joined from. The alive child should be fed with milk until the earth fulfils its task, (eats away the place they are joined from) and separates them." They did what he said and thus in a short period of time the alive one separated from the dead one as the earth had eaten away the joint. He was treated (given medication), regained his health and stayed alive. He used to be called Mowla Abu Hanifa (one freed by Abu Hanifa).

The Magic of the Perfume

Ubaid bin Ishaq relates that there was a quarrel between Abu Yusuf and his wife. She became angry and upset and stopped talking to him. Abu Yusuf became irritated by this and thus said to her in anger, "If you do not talk to me by tonight then you are divorced with three talaq. When his temper had cooled down and realised what he had said he tried his utmost best to make her talk to him but she'd ignore him and refused to talk. He became worried and distressed and so went to Imam Abu Hanifa's house. "Who is knocking on the door at this time of the night." said Imam Abu Hanifa. "It's alright, it's only me," replied Abu Yusuf "(Allah forgive me and you.)" Imam Abu Hanifa opened the door and Abu Yusuf entered and explained what had happened. Imam Abu Hanifa replied, "Don't worry it is an easy problem to solve" and told him to bring a lamp. He also asked for some clothes, a pallium and perfume. He dressed him with these things and then told him to go home and when he entered the house he should say to his wife, "If you don't talk to me by tonight and thus we are divorced you will regret it as you will see for yourself that you were the only woman in my life." The narrator says when he entered his house and his wife

saw him all smartly dressed up and smelt the perfume and he said what Imam Abu Hanifa had told him to say she burst out in anger, “You so and so, you were at a harlots house (adulteress).” Thus the couple were saved from being divorced by the blessing of Allah (swt) through Imam Abu Hanifa, as the condition was not fulfilled.

The Thousand Dinars

It has been reported that a man died in Imam Abu Hanifa's house and before he died he had entrusted in another man's care a bag which had a thousand dinars inside it. He told him, “Keep it safe until my son has matured and when he has matured and become responsible give him what you like.” When the child attained puberty this trustee handed over the bag and kept the dinars for him self and said, “Your father told me to give you what I like, and I like you to have the bag.” The child became puzzled and baffled and related this incident to the ulama and asked for their help but they couldn't solve the problem. He then went to Abu Hanifa. Imam Abu Hanifa told him his father had made a very delicate bequest and was very wise in his (wasiat) bequest. He called the trustee and asked him, “Did the

deceased tell you to give him what you like?" He replied, "Yes." Imam Abu Hanifa said, "In that case give him the dinars as the deceased told you to give him what you like and you like the dinar that's why you kept them for yourself and not the bag." The dinars were taken from him and given to the son.

Helping the Slanderer

Waki bin al Jarrah related that he had a very kind neighbour who was a hafiz of hadith. He loved his wife very much but one day something happened between them and he said to her, "If you ask me for talaq tonight and I don't give you it then you are divorced with three talaq." She in return said, "All my slaves will be freed and all my wealth will be given as sadaqa if I do not ask for a talaq tonight." When they cooled down and came to their senses they were very upset. They came to me, related the incident and asked for my help. I said, "I don't know how to solve this problem, but go to Abu Hanifa." The man used to slander Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam Abu Hanifa knew of this so he replied, "I am ashamed to go to him." I told him that I would go with him. Instead we first went

to Ibn abi Layla and Sufyan Thawri and they also could not help. Then we went to Abu Hanifa on his accord, although he didn't really want to go because he was ashamed. I was with both of them and we entered his house and related the incident. He asked them how they made the oath, which words they used in making the oath. He then asked them whether they were both really sorry and wanted to be relieved from their oaths and whether they wanted to be together, they replied, "Yes." He told the wife to ask for talaq, she said to her husband, "Divorce me." He then told the husband to say in reply, "You are divorced if you want it." He then told the wife to say, "I don't want it." After this he told them they had been freed from their oaths. He also told him to repent and not to slander anyone. Waki says, "From then on the husband and wife prayed for Abu Hanifa after every salat."

The Atheists

It has been reported from Imam Abu Hanifa that he said he was like a sword on the atheists of his time. There were many of them and they had power and strength and were always looking for an opportunity to

kill him. One day whilst he was sitting alone in the mosque, a group of them pounced on him with knives and swords drawn and were just about to kill him when he said to them, “Take it easy just answer one question then you can do what you please.” They agreed. He asked, “What do you say regarding a man who says I saw a ship, a vessel loaded with cargo, full with goods, in the depths of some ocean, being battered by gales and rough waves without a navigator, or anybody to care of it. Despite this it proceeds taking its course. Is something like this possible even in the mind. They replied, “No, this is a thing that one's mind doesn't accept and one's imagination doesn't permit.” Imam Abu Hanifa said, “Subhanallah, if it is not possible in the mind for a ship to keep its course in these conditions without a navigator or a crew, then how is it possible for this world to carry on despite its ever fluctuating conditions and constantly changing affairs and activities without a creator or a care taker. They all began to cry and said, “You are right.” They put away their swords and repented from their sins and error.

Good Judgement

Mohammed bin Ali relates that a man happened to pass by Imam Abu Hanifa while he was sitting down. On seeing him the Imam said, "This man is a stranger, he has something sweet tucked under his sleeves and he is a teacher." We thus asked for this man. He said, "I am a teacher, not from these parts and I have some sultanas in my sleeves." We asked the Imam how he knew this. He replied, "When I saw him looking at the small children and carefully looking left and right, I realised that he was a teacher and a stranger When I saw the flies entering his sleeves I realised there is something sweet there."

A Good Profit

Imam Abu Hanifa relates that he was once in the desert and in need of some water. A Bedouin came carrying a bottle of water. I asked, "How much will you sell the water for?" "Five dirhams" he replied. I tried to bargain with him but he did not reduce the price. I took the bottle of water and gave him the five dirhams. I then asked him, "How about some sweek (a dish made out of fine flour)." I ordered that it be given to him. It was

poured in a bowl and put infront of him. He kept on eating till he became very thirsty. He asked, "How much is a glass of water?" I replied "five dirhams." He kept on haggling with me and I with him till I finally sold a glass of water for five dirhams. I managed to regain the five dirhams I had given him and also keep the water.

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Abdullah bin al-Mubarak relates:

One day, while I was sitting with Imam Malik, an older man came, who was received with extreme respect by the Imam and made to sit beside him. After he had gone, the Imam said to Abdullah:" Do you know who this man was? He was Abu Haneefa of Iraq, who, if he wanted to could prove this pillar to have been made of gold."

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